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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 27 April 1993, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. WARD (Canada)

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General debate (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mrs. ALBANEZ BARNOLA (Observer for Venezuela) said that despite the tragedies unfolding in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia and the Sudan, it was important not to forget the hundreds of thousands of families in other parts of the world who lived in the grip of poverty every day. Far from diminishing, that scourge had been gaining ground in Latin America and the Caribbean, despite the favourable economic results recorded in some countries. Most Governments in the region were well aware of the moral and economic necessity of ensuring a more equitable distribution of goods and services. Convinced that GDP growth, increasing consumption and declining unemployment rates were not sufficient to combat misery and inequality effectively, institutions such as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the Latin American Economic System (SELA) had made support for social policies and programmes for the poorest segments of society one of their priorities for the 1990s.

2. The 1980s had been a lost decade for Venezuela and for the rest of Latin America. In view of the continuing deterioration of the social situation, the Venezuelan Government had since 1989 been earmarking substantial resources for the expansion of existing programmes, focusing on the most vulnerable groups and improvements in nutrition. In so doing, the Government had sought to lay the groundwork for a social welfare system, in particular by strengthening existing institutions. The aim had been to take measures that would do more than deal with contingencies and would resolve structural problems. Those efforts had made it possible to advance toward the objectives identified at the World Summit for Children which had been included in the national programme of action. Plans of action were being developed for States and municipalities in response to the need for political and administrative decentralization.

3. Notable progress had been made in several fields, including poliomyelitis eradication and the administration of tetanus toxoid vaccine to all women of child-bearing age. In addition, maternal and child health care services were currently available to 75 per cent of the population; milk and cereals were being distributed to the most needy and iron was being added to cornmeal.

4. The cooperation of UNICEF was nevertheless still essential in order to consolidate the gains already made, extend vaccination coverage and test new strategies that would make it possible to reach the 50 per cent of the population of the region living below the poverty lines.

5. The countries of the region were somewhat concerned to note that emergency interventions by UNICEF were multiplying; a trend which would certainly affect the allocation of resources to development programmes. In 1992, the amount of resources allocated to the region had decreased by 1 per cent as compared with previous years.

6. Few bodies in the United Nations system enjoyed as much prestige as UNICEF. Its many activities in the service of children made it one of the most effective defenders of fundamental rights; and, the rights of children were undoubtedly among the most threatened of those rights. UNICEF support to Governments and

(Mrs. Albanez Barnola, Observer, Venezuela)

civic institutions aimed at promoting respect for the Convention on the Rights of the Child should therefore be strengthened.

7. With respect to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199, according to which it was for the recipient Government to identify needs and define the strategies to be followed, Venezuela believed that the duties of the resident coordinator should be carried out with due respect for the autonomy of all cooperating institutions. Moreover, programming cycles needed to be harmonized in order to maximize returns from technical and financial resources.

8. UNICEF activities in the area of family planning deserved particular attention, since in Venezuela 20 per cent of births occurred among girls between the ages of thirteen and nineteen. The Government had initiated a programme to prevent early pregnancies which had received support from various civic institutions, the Roman Catholic Church and UNICEF. Moreover, an AIDS prevention programme for secondary school students was currently being carried out, and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) was thinking of making that programme a model for the continent as a whole.

9. The Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean (SAFLAC) (E/ICEF/1993/7) was also worthy of particular attention. The Facility was an effective mechanism which UNICEF had set up to help Governments minimize the negative impact of structural adjustment programmes on local populations. Venezuela supported the proposal to increase the resources allocated to SAFLAC for the biennium 1994-1995, and welcomed the allocation of additional funds to the PROANDES programme for the Andean subregion.

10. In conclusion, she drew attention to the political and economic crisis affecting her country. In order to protect democracy, uphold justice and guarantee social peace, it was necessary to strengthen national solidarity and achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth.

11. Mr. ATABEKOV (Observer for Kyrgyzstan) said his delegation fully approved of the approaches and goals of UNICEF as described by the Executive Director.

12. After sketching a very grim picture of the economic and health care situation in his country, he said that Kyrgyzstan did not intend to compete with the developing countries for the resources they so greatly needed. Nevertheless, as a newly independent State in the midst of transition to a market economy and democracy, Kyrgyzstan should be able to rely on cooperation from UNICEF, whose mandate involved attending to the well-being of children all over the world. In addition to its economic and social difficulties, Kyrgyzstan, a land-locked country, had recently been struck by two successive earthquakes, and since summer was approaching it would have to cope with outbreaks of diarrhoeal and infectious diseases. It was therefore vital for UNICEF to continue rendering assistance, not only in the form of medical supplies, but also in the form of training and know-how.

13. It would be helpful if future UNICEF activities were to focus less on emergency aid and more on long-term technical assistance programmes.

14. In conclusion, he informed the members of the Executive Board that his country fully supported the Convention on the Rights of the Child and intended

(Mr. Atabekov, Observer, Kyrgyzstan)

to ratify it as soon as economic circumstances and the ongoing institutional reform would permit.

15. Mr. SCHILLING (Germany) said he was gratified to see that, despite the budget constraints under which many countries were operating, UNICEF was continuing to receive substantial financial support. For its part, his Government had once again increased its contribution to UNICEF's general resources in 1993.

16. The dramatic changes which had been taking place all over the world since the end of the cold war had posed a significant challenge to the United Nations system. The increasingly important role the United Nations was assuming in the field of conflict diplomacy called for considerable financial and human resources. It was hard to overstate the strictly non-political character of humanitarian operations. In the event of armed conflict, all parties had a responsibility to guarantee the security of personnel participating in relief missions.

17. Given the increase in the number of emergencies, Germany supported all UNICEF emergency activities, just as it supported UNICEF operations in Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the newly independent States. However, those interventions, though necessary, should not displace assistance to children in developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, as UNICEF's primary concern.

18. In many countries, high military spending still represented one of the major obstacles to the well-being of women and children. For that reason, democracy and respect for human rights, together with good governance, were fundamentally important for development and for economic and social progress.

19. His delegation had repeatedly pointed out the extent to which poverty, famine and environmental destruction, on the one hand, and population growth, on the other, were two sides of the same coin. All bilateral and multilateral efforts should therefore be directed toward the elimination of poverty, since population growth rates could be lowered by ensuring socio-economic development. In that connection, UNICEF should follow up on its collaboration with the United Nations Fund for Population Assistance (UNFPA) and other relevant agencies of the United Nations system in preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held at Cairo in 1994.

20. Germany attached great importance to the recent evaluation of UNICEF. The Executive Board should study very carefully the comments and recommendations contained in the evaluation report (E/ICEF/1993/CRP.7), in order to make the best possible strategic choices. Germany supported the conclusion in paragraph 2, page xxix of the report, which stated that the final choice of strategy must be made at the country level, even if UNICEF had its own role to play, especially with regard to the mobilization of national partners.

21. Mrs. CORNAZ (Switzerland) said she viewed the external evaluation of UNICEF as a first step in a process intended to stimulate the thinking of all interested parties. She emphasized the importance that the evaluators had attached to local capacity building and empowerment of people; she appealed to UNICEF to relativise responsibility for service delivery and to commit itself systematically to strengthening national initiative and capacities. Placing too much emphasis on service delivery might prove to be counterproductive. Meeting the immediate needs of mothers and children was important, but the Fund's mandate extended further; the aim was to enable countries to meet the essential needs of children in a sustainable manner, taking into account the particular circumstances of families and the population at large.

22. No matter how difficult they were to achieve, the empowerment and the participation of populations and communities were essential if living conditions were to be improved in the long term. That was why Switzerland hoped that goal would become an integral part of the UNICEF strategy. The study currently under way of the ways in which some NGOs were successful reaching the poorest groups would no doubt provide many valuable lessons in that regard. Her delegation regretted that the Executive Director's report had not indicated what strategy UNICEF intended to pursue in that area.

23. With respect to nutrition, an area to which UNICEF rightly attached a great deal of importance, her delegation was disappointed that the Executive Director's report had made no reference either to the International Conference on Nutrition held in 1992, or to the Fund's efforts in assisting countries to achieve food security. The renewed interest in breastfeeding, which had been generated, in large part, by UNICEF, was already yielding results in many countries. Nevertheless, the Fund should also focus its efforts on removing other impediments to breastfeeding which were not related to hospital conditions or commercial considerations, namely, the condition of mothers in their communities, in particular, mothers working outside the home. With respect to activities in the field of micronutrients, Switzerland believed that the distribution of food supplements had been overemphasized as compared to activities aimed at enabling families to have a healthy diet without depending on such programmes.

24. Lastly, with respect to the reform of United Nations agencies, Switzerland was gratified by the expression of willingness to improve the efficiency and usefulness of the United Nations system, particularly since needs were increasing while at the same time, recession was reducing available resources. In that context, strengthening inter-agency cooperation and coordination became crucially important. In regard to reforms relating to management by intergovernmental bodies, the proposals of the group Piriz Ballon appeared to be a step in the right direction. It would also be a good idea to strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council in setting overall policy guidelines for operational activities. While the proposal to reduce the number of members of United Nations governing bodies and funds would no doubt make the deliberations more efficient, it might also prevent some partners from participating. That risk was particularly serious for UNICEF, which not only depended on its partners for voluntary contributions but also had to work much more closely with NGOs than other agencies. It was therefore essential to find formulas for rotation and consultation that would permit all partners to participate in debates on substantial issues.

25. Mrs. WRIGHT EDELMAN (United States of America) expressed her firm hope that, the progress in communications and technology, together with the concern shown by an increasing number of Governments since the end of the cold war for the well-being of their populations, would translate into high-priority action aimed at combating the ills, many of them preventable, that afflicted children, even in the United States. Each day, throughout the world, poverty caused the deaths of thousands of children, and war - or violence in the case of the United States - was claiming young victims everywhere.

26. The new President of the United States had committed himself to investing in people first, especially children. He had already sent to Congress proposals - especially financial proposals - aimed at meeting the needs of children and families. One of those programmes was designed to raise the rate of immunization of infants in the United States to the level of the other highly-developed countries. Under the leadership of UNICEF and other aid and development organizations, children could be lifted out of poverty. In a country as rich as the United States, one child in five was poor. The necessary technology, financial resources, knowledge and political leadership existed, and by following the path indicated by UNICEF, WHO and other organizations, it would be possible to save millions of young lives and meet children's fundamental needs for health care, food and education, while achieving economic growth. The swift ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the success of the World Summit for Children and important States attached to the national programmes of action were testaments to the general desire to achieve those goals. The United States would continue to play a leadership role in that effort.

27. The suffering of children facing hunger, preventable diseases, early death and poverty was the same everywhere, whether in the United States, Latin America, Africa or Asia, and the consequences for the future were the same. However, the industrialized countries did not have to choose between their children and those of other countries. They had the resources and the responsibility to help the children of both worlds. The problems were identical, although on different scales; they called for similar solutions, and the solutions could be transferred across borders. That approach was also a way of promoting world peace. The United States was looking forward to working with UNICEF in order to mobilize the resources needed to address both the "loud" and "silent" emergencies. It would discuss with UNICEF the role UNICEF could play within a restructured and more effective United Nations.

28. The United States mourned the deaths of two personalities devoted to the cause of UNICEF, Audrey Hepburn, its goodwill ambassador, and Larry Bruce, Chairman of the United States Committee for UNICEF; it also mourned the deaths of UNICEF field workers who had been killed in the performance of their duties. Not a single day should be wasted in the personal and collective struggle to ensure that by the forthcoming turn of the century essential human needs were met and no more children died unnecessarily from disease.

29. Mr. SOH (Republic of Korea) said that his country was about to embark upon a new phase in its cooperation with UNICEF, since the current cooperation programme (1990-1993) was also the last and a Korean national committee was expected to be established in 1993. On that occasion, the Republic of Korea would increase its contribution to UNICEF general resources to $900,000. He was pleased to note that nearly 130 countries had already ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and 75 countries had finalized their national programmes of action (NPAs), which must be translated into concrete action; every effort should be made to integrate the programmes into national development plans. His Government organized seminars to encourage local governments and non-governmental organizations to generate proposals for programmes, and a National Council for Children and Youth had been established in his country to monitor the implementation of the NPA. With regard to the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children, it was not enough to mobilize adequate resources; priorities must also be set. Similarly, in order to achieve lasting results, national capacities would have to be developed by training people and empowering them to participate effectively.

30. UNICEF should continue to collaborate with other United Nations agencies (such as UNHCR, WFP, UNDP and WHO in order to provide more rapid and effective assistance for children in emergency situations, one of the areas where it had achieved outstanding results the previous year. The Republic of Korea attached great importance to the idea that there should be continuity between emergency assistance and the pursuit of such long-term development objectives as the fight against poverty, ignorance and diseases. It supported UNICEF efforts to improve the status of women, beginning with the education of girls. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation had declared the period 1991-2000 the Decade of the Girl Child. Where family planning was concerned, UNICEF must concentrate its efforts on education and information - two key factors in action in that area - particularly in relation to birth spacing and responsible parenthood.

31. With regard to health projects, the assessment and strengthening of the mechanism for cooperation between UNICEF and WHO - the Joint Committee on Health Policy - must be continued. In view of the importance of basic education in combating poverty and considering the limited number of teachers, community-based non-formal primary education projects should be developed. Following the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the holding of the World Summit for Children, UNICEF activities had been developing in a particularly favourable climate. In conclusion, he reaffirmed his country's commitment to the cause of children.

32. Mrs. KANG Ling (China) said that her Government was pleased to note that UNICEF had provided considerable assistance to various countries in formulating and implementing national programmes of action as part of the Plan of Action for implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s. Although UNICEF's resources had increased, the rate of increase of general resources was lower than that of supplementary funds. She appealed to donor countries to contribute more to UNICEF general resources.

33. The Chinese delegation proposed that UNICEF and the developed countries should increase their financial assistance to developing countries in order to

(Mrs. Kang Ling, China)

assist them in implementing their NPA goals; that emergency assistance to Africa should be combined with rehabilitation and long-term development activities; and that UNICEF should continue to combine efforts in favour of children with the development of basic education, income-generating activities and maternal and child health care, and to link development with environmental protection, taking into account actual conditions in each country.

34. The aim of the restructuring of the United Nations should be simultaneously to reduce administrative expenditure, enhance the Organization's efficiency and improve assistance to developing countries. The mandates and priorities of the various United Nations agencies and organizations should be maintained. China supported some of the points raised in the Executive Director's report (E/ICEF/1993/L.8), especially that UNICEF must retain its unique status as an organization mandated to help women and children. It owed its success and popularity among developing countries to that very uniqueness. Its identity must not be forgotten when country programmes were formulated and implemented. As the Observer for Cameroon had stressed at the 4th meeting, UNICEF must adhere to the principle of neutrality when delivering assistance.

35. As part of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children, the Chinese Government had provided assistance to 30 provinces and autonomous regions in establishing their respective plans of action. Most of the plans of action already established were scheduled to be implemented in two stages: 1993-1995 and 1996-2000. Experiments would be conducted in counties with very different situations in order to integrate local achievements with national objectives. In August 1992 the East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office had organized a conference at Beijing on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and China would submit its first report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in the second quarter of 1993.

36. China, where one fifth of the world's children lived, attached great importance to programmes of cooperation with UNICEF and allocated considerable human, material and financial resources to such programmes. Those efforts had enabled her country to obtain remarkable results and gain vital experience, which in some respects had placed China in a leading position. However, despite its Government's efforts, China was still a developing country with very lopsided social and economic development in its different regions. Much still remained to be done in a country where women and children did not have access to basic services everywhere.

37. Mrs. CHOUDHURY (Observer for Bangladesh) said that at the Seventh Summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) held at Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 10 and 11 April 1993, the member countries had endorsed the Colombo Resolution on Children adopted by the second SAARC Ministerial Conference in September 1992, and recalled the objectives of the SAARC Plan of Action on Children; they had also emphasized the need to protect children against neglect, cruelty and exploitation and agreed to promote cooperation with each other. The seven SAARC member countries, including Bangladesh, had drawn up national plans of action and set mid-decade targets in the areas of immunization, sanitation, control of diarrhoeal diseases, iodine deficiency and guinea worm; they hoped that UNICEF would strengthen its cooperation with SAARC.

(Mrs. Choudhury, Observer, Bangladesh)

38. The end of the cold war had raised many hopes, but development efforts - which were crucial to improving the welfare of women and children - were being hampered by the world economic crisis. Despite the increase in UNICEF resources, it was disquieting to note that some of the major donor countries had been forced to reduce their financial assistance to UNICEF. She hoped that measure was only a temporary one.

39. Bangladesh was heartened to note that a large number of countries had already established national plans of action, for which they would now have to mobilize resources - with the assistance of donor countries - in order to integrate them into their national development plans. In that connection, Bangladesh supported the recommendations of the Executive Director contained in document E/ICEF/1993/12.

40. UNICEF must also contribute to the implementation of the objectives of Agenda 21, continue to promote basic education and literacy, address the problem of poor children in urban areas, and fight discrimination against girls in many countries. Although UNICEF had provided considerable emergency assistance, it must ensure that relief was linked to the development process, and in discharging that responsibility it needed to foster closer cooperation with the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

41. With regard to the multi-donor evaluation of UNICEF (E/ICEF/1993/CRP.7), her country felt that decisions concerning the use of UNICEF resources should continue to be taken on the basis of country programming. Efforts should be made to ensure that the interest shown by Governments in the programmes financed by UNICEF did not lead to any redirection of national priorities. In addition, UNICEF should encourage institutional development efforts that went beyond project implementation support, while empowerment should not be limited to community participation, but should also involve the acquisition of knowledge, employment and overall development. The position of resident coordinator should be strengthened and United Nations agencies should coordinate their activities in the field more effectively, without losing their individual identity or comparative advantages.

42. In 1991 her country had established a democratic government committed to introducing a market economy, while striving to correct any adverse consequences that development might have for vulnerable groups. The expanded programme on immunization had increased immunization coverage from less than 5 per cent in 1985 to more than 80 per cent in 1991. Over 80 per cent of the population had access to drinking water. Legislation had been introduced to make the iodization of salt compulsory by 1993. Universal and compulsory primary education had been introduced in January 1992, and in rural areas education was free for girls up to class VIII.

43. Mr. SCIALOJA (Italy) noted and expressed approval of the report of the Executive Director (E/ICEF/1993/2, Parts I and II). He then paid tribute to the UNICEF staff members who had lost their lives during the performance of their duties.

44. The most urgent items on the agenda were the environment, family planning, urban poverty (particularly street children), and social and sanitation services. Given the growing number of emergencies in the world, the United

(Mr. Scialoja, Italy)

Nations should address the root causes of tensions rather than always having to intervene after the fact to contain their consequences.

45. Humanitarian assistance by UNICEF in "loud emergencies" should not be provided at the expense of "silent emergencies", which required more comprehensive long-term action. Intervention by UNICEF in complex emergency situations should be coordinated and integrated on a system-wide basis under the leadership of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

46. The restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations would oblige UNICEF to review and refine the elements which gave it its comparative advantage. The multi-donor evaluation (E/ICEF/1993/CRP.7) had recognized the operational and financial flexibility of UNICEF and stressed that it would benefit from the "unitary" United Nations proposed by the Secretary-General. Indeed, the scale of the multilateral actions now needed called for an integrated system-wide response.

47. The review of operational activities carried out in implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199 had stressed the capital importance of the country strategy notes and of the resident coordinator system in ensuring the most effective convergence of multilateral activities. That would make it possible to identify coherent planning priorities and areas which, while avoiding dispersion of energies and resources, would generate the critical mass essential in order to attract private investment and bilateral programmes and encourage the participation of NGOs and local communities.

48. His delegation fully supported operational coordination among multilateral development programmes and commended the declared intention of UNICEF to promote its interaction with other United Nations programmes and agencies. In fact, Italy intended to establish effective linkages between its bilateral programmes and multilateral cooperation, especially through UNICEF, whose activities involved aid areas which were a priority for his country. To avoid a fragmentation of projects, which would result in wastage of resources and compartmentalization of aid, his country was fostering cooperation activities in keeping with the human development approach and economic growth patterns strictly related to the struggle against poverty. UNICEF had a key role to play in that endeavour.

49. UNICEF must maintain the right balance between its advocacy and operational activities and between its social concerns and its efforts to promote development. In its role as a critical partner of Governments, it had been able to identify, mobilize and catalyse national and international energies. However, it should be careful not to play the role of substitute, act in isolation, duplicate others' efforts or take on excessive burdens.

50. The newly independent countries of Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States had appealed to UNICEF for assistance. The task of the United Nations in that respect was essentially to complement and support the programmes established in other forums, especially in the European context.

(Mr. Scialoja, Italy)

51. With regard to the recommendations of the World Summit for Children, his Government was about to adopt a new charter of children's rights. Italy's voluntary contribution to UNICEF for 1993 would reflect the difficult economic situation the country faced. However, Italy was willing to consider contributing additional financial resources, to be specifically devoted to various multi-bilateral programmes administered by the Fund. In addition, it would recognize the special role played by UNICEF in complex emergencies by contributing substantial supplementary funds to UNICEF activities in the former Yugoslavia and Somalia.

52. Lastly, his Government wished to reaffirm its interest in the role and activities of the International Child Development Centre in Florence. It was considering the possibility of renewing the agreement governing the Centre's activities and would welcome any action by UNICEF to find other partners for the financing of the Centre and its programmes.

53. Mr. TREPCZYNSKI (Observer for Poland) commended the actions undertaken by UNICEF and its secretariat, which had made use of extrabudgetary funds in responding to the many emergency situations occurring in the world. As a result, the very important long-term development activities financed from general resources had not been reduced in any way. Emergency assistance had increased as a result of the population migrations in Central and Eastern Europe. UNICEF, WHO, UNESCO and other United Nations agencies were therefore facing new challenges, although no one seemed to grasp the full scale of the tragedy that was unfolding.

54. In the implementation of the reform of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, great care should be taken not to reduce, but rather to enhance, the effectiveness of UNICEF, which in its 50 years of existence had created a unique way of operating which had enabled it to gain public confidence. UNICEF could implement its task well only if it pursued comprehensive activities on all fronts: programme delivery, emergency aid, advocacy and social mobilization, information and fund-raising. The influence enjoyed by UNICEF was much greater than the financial resources at its disposal. Efforts must be made to prevent any erosion of the capacity to act and credibility of UNICEF.

55. The Greeting Card Operation and fund-raising activities were an important part of the work of UNICEF. His delegation noted with appreciation the improved management of that sector, which could not only enhance its financial efficiency but also consolidate the good name of UNICEF. It also welcomed the contribution made by the Greeting Card Operation in enhancing the profile of UNICEF in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

56. His delegation welcomed with satisfaction the country programme recommendations for the Asian Republics of the former Soviet Union and for Albania. The harsh situation in those countries fully justified that assistance. The modest sums accorded to those countries in no way detracted from the resources available for allocation to other developing countries.

(Mr. Trepczynski, Observer, Poland)

57. His delegation fully supported the proposal for priority treatment for African countries, many of which were still facing tragic situations. Part of that assistance should also be used to encourage debt relief, and even debt cancellation, for the countries of the region.

58. His delegation shared the opinion that the question of sanctions against Iraq and other States should be reviewed as a matter of urgency, because the groups most affected were often not the ones targeted by the sanctions.

59. He was also pleased to note that the Secretariat had been carrying out the tasks laid down in resolution 1992/19 on Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States, adopted by the Executive Board in 1992. However, not all the operational and financial provisions of that resolution had been fully implemented. Much still remained to be done in the countries concerned during the transition, particularly in respect of the elaboration of national plans of action and support for health, social security and education.

60. His delegation generally favoured the action lines laid down in the medium-term plan and other documents of the session, including the financial and budgetary documents, concerning also the global funds, and believed that the secretariat was managing the funds entrusted to it in a satisfactory manner.

61. Mr. CAT (Uruguay) said that the President of Uruguay, Mr. Lacalle, had from the beginning of his mandate, set himself the objective of ensuring the well-being of the most disadvantaged groups through the combined efforts of the public and private sectors. Since the desire to build a promising future for children was unanimous, policies had been adopted to benefit children and make the best possible use of ever limited resources. Although it was a relatively developed country, Uruguay had some constraints in respect of services and institutions and the situation of families, and of women and children in particular, had therefore become much worse in some cases. The fight against poverty, with the assistance of public and private entities, and with the participation of all members of the community, was the priority objective of social policies.

62. The starting-point of the social investment programme had been to determine the exact number of beneficiaries of social programmes in order to ensure the best possible use of economic and human resources so that the most disadvantaged groups received benefits and so that coordination between different bodies would encourage an analysis and evaluation of those programmes and the possible redistribution of social expenditure. Various social programmes had been undertaken to build housing for disadvantaged groups and to build schools and high schools, polyclinics, nurseries and feeding-centres for children. International funds had made it possible to accelerate the rural electrification programme throughout the country and road construction in the most remote areas. The national food institute had tried to bring about a qualitative and quantitative improvement in the food supply for disadvantaged groups. Support from UNICEF and non-governmental organizations had made it possible to increase the number of centres for children and families (centros de atención a la infancia y la familia) which provided various services, including social assistance.

(Mr. Cat, Uruguay)

63. Effective economic policies (establishment of favourable conditions for investment, fight against inflation and expansion of markets through regional integration) were helping to achieve greater social justice by protecting the purchasing power of wage-earners and ensuring a more equitable distribution of income through an appropriate fiscal regime. His Government had taken various steps in order to offset the adjustment measures that were made necessary by the economic crisis. During the three years it had been in office, inflation had declined every year by 129 per cent; it had decreased by 54 per cent over the past 12 months. The gross domestic product (GDP) had shown a 7.5 per cent increase in 1992, and the budgetary situation, which in 1990 had recorded a deficit amounting to 7 per cent of GDP, had shown a surplus corresponding to 0.6 per cent of GDP in 1992. Average family income, one of the most important indicators, had increased by over 20 per cent, in real terms, over the past three years.

64. The participants at the World Summit for Children, held in 1990, had adopted the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children. Uruguay reiterated its support for the commitments undertaken at that time. Every year, one million children died in the Latin American and Caribbean countries, mainly from preventable diseases. Although not all the countries faced the same problems, progress in some countries should help to encourage progress in others. It was not enough to ensure the survival of children because, as provided in the sixth preambular paragraph of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the child should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.

65. Uruguay, which had been able to carry out supplementary activities for mothers and children in the area of health, education and nutrition through the support of the Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean, supported the proposal to increase the resources allocated to that Facility. It thanked the members of the UNICEF regional office for their assistance in establishing the first five-year programme and in the follow-up of the national plan of action.

66. Mr. MUSUKA (Observer for Zambia) said that Zambia had aggressively implemented development programmes for women and children in an effort to achieve their empowerment. To that end, it had collaborated closely with UNICEF and other donors. Zambia, with UNICEF, had established a joint programming committee consisting of representatives of Government ministries and departments, research institutions and representatives of donor agencies and non-governmental organizations in an effort to better coordinate UNICEF assistance to Government development programmes. The Committee was divided into specialized subcommittees. It had embarked on a national programme of action in order to implement the recommendations of the World Summit for Children. The Ministry of Sport, Youth and Child Development was the focal point.

67. Zambia, in cooperation with UNICEF, had launched a country programme consisting of activities in the areas of health, education and social planning. In the area of health, UNICEF had supported the reform process and decentralization with an emphasis on immunization training of health personnel, training of nutritionists and birth attendants and the promotion of breast-feeding. Support for the development of the educational sector had been received in the context of "education for all" initiatives.

(Mr. Musuka, Observer, Zambia)

68. Zambia's urban population was growing very rapidly, aggravating the problem of street children. With assistance from UNICEF, Zambia had established community-based programmes aimed at raising awareness of the rights of the child. The year 1992 had been proclaimed the year of the Zambian child and many UNICEF-supported activities had taken place to mark the year. In 1993, the Government had established a social sector rehabilitation and development programme in the areas of health, education, agriculture and communications. Zambia was still recovering from the ravages of the 1992 drought and hoped to receive further assistance to replenish the resources that had to be diverted for that emergency situation. The majority of orphans in Zambia were a product of the ravages of AIDS. The high mortality rate of the population of child-bearing age was causing concern. Zambia would appreciate assistance from UNICEF in addressing that problem. Family planning programmes and public education needed to be strengthened without losing sight of the consequences of AIDS.

69. Zambia welcomed the multi-donor evaluation (E/ICEF/1993/CRP.7) and the comments by the Executive Director (E/ICEF/1993/CRP.8). On the question of headquarters office accommodation, his delegation believed that the non-financial factors should be taken into consideration in arriving at a decision.

70. Mr. JADMANI (Pakistan) said that the conditions necessary for the survival, protection and development of children could not be achieved unless the phenomenon of human development was studied in all its aspects and goals for children were adapted to the socio-economic milieu. The Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children and the inclusion of the goals of the Summit in Agenda 21 had already created broad awareness about the rights of children, particularly their right to survival and development. In the context of the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, all United Nations bodies should adopt an integrated, complementary approach to support programmes for children, the feasibility of which had been demonstrated by UNICEF over the years.

71. His delegation fully supported the Executive Director's view that the delicate balance between "silent" and "loud" emergencies should be maintained. The "silent" emergencies were perhaps less spectacular but certainly more devastating than the "loud" emergencies, as demonstrated by the deaths of 35,000 children every day in the world and the failure of the international community to banish the scourges of poverty, disease and ignorance. A revitalized campaign was needed to draw attention to those silent tragedies and increase the funds allocated to programmes for children at both the national and international levels.

72. Pakistan had signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its national laws were being brought into line with the Convention and were being used as an educational basis for implementing the national programme of action. Pakistan was participating in the work of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation to benefit children. It realized, however, that legislative support alone could not provide an adequate solution to the problem. The objective should be to attack in the first place the social causes of violations of the rights of the child.

(Mr. Jadmani, Pakistan)

73. Pakistan had been one of the initiators of the World Summit for Children. The Summit's Declaration and Plan of Action had been adapted to the needs and resources of the country. Its national programme of action had been interwoven into the social action programme of the eighth five-year plan. An innovative national rural support programme had been designed and would be implemented in selected districts of the country. In the field of health, priority had been given to the expanded programme of immunization, control of diarrhoeal diseases, control of acute respiratory infections and health care. Although a modest and realistic venture, the national programme of action was making significant demands on the national budget.

74. Pakistan agreed with the Executive Director that the bulk of the resources for achieving the goals envisaged in national programmes of action should be generated by the developing countries themselves. In the post-cold war era, donor countries were increasingly prone to reducing their official development assistance. The guiding principle for the implementation of national programmes of action should no doubt be to rely on the resources of the family, the community and the country. External aid should be used to supplement those resources. That did not mean, however, that the developed countries should shy away from participation in those programmes, since enhanced assistance on their part could usher in a new era of peace, prosperity and development for the entire world. UNICEF had demonstrated over the years that its programmes were feasible and affordable. The international community needed to pay urgent attention to the solution of regional disputes which were eating into the scarce resources available at the expense of social development.

75. Asia was the region of the world with the largest number of children. It had witnessed both "loud" and "silent" emergencies. In order to ensure that what UNICEF had achieved so far was not lost on account of the scarcity of resources, the "silent" emergencies needed to be addressed. The five-year country programme for Pakistan approved by the Executive Board of UNICEF in 1992 required a similar approach. The Government of Pakistan was trying its best to make that programme a success through the mobilization of its domestic resources. However, its success would depend largely on the regular inflow of adequate finances from UNICEF and on official development assistance.

76. His delegation commended UNICEF on its improved budget format, which provided greater coherence and transparency. That, however, should not prevent UNICEF from undertaking more in-depth study and analysis of the structure of its budget in order to further simplify and improve its presentation. With regard to the revised UNICEF budget for 1992-1993 and the proposed budget for the biennium 1994-1995, his delegation shared the observation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) that an increase in posts at Headquarters should not be at the expense of activities and programme delivery in the field.

(Mr. Jadmani, Pakistan)

77. Pakistan appreciated the structure of UNICEF, which was more decentralized than other comparable agencies. It also welcomed the fact that UNICEF employed national officers from developing countries to coordinate the activities of the Professional staff in its field offices with the objective of promoting the development, utilization and strengthening of national capacities.

78. Mr. BAEZ (Nicaragua) said his Government attached the utmost importance to social planning programmes which sought to increase awareness of the needs of the population and to mobilize a greater volume of local, national and foreign resources for programmes to benefit vulnerable groups. Substantial resources had been allocated to social programmes in 1993 (representing 46.4 per cent of the national budget). The Ministry of Social Welfare was responsible for coordinating the implementation of programmes aimed at improving the level of living of the population. The support of UNICEF for efforts aimed at improving services in the areas of health and education and at institution-building was therefore of crucial importance.

79. The question of inter-agency coordination, which had already been considered on other occasions by the Executive Board, received special emphasis in the Executive Director's reports for the current session. The advantages of a more rigorous coordination of contributions by the specialized agencies to the solution of problems common to the developing countries were evident. It was therefore natural that appropriate emphasis should be placed on that subject in the context of the restructuring of the Organization's activities in the economic and social fields. For Nicaragua, that process should help to simplify the procedures for authorizing expenditures and should lead to closer coordination at the local and international levels.

80. The report of the Executive Director (E/ICEF/1993/2, Parts I and II) eloquently presented the problems which UNICEF faced. Emergency operations, which had saved the lives of thousands of children who were victims of hunger and war, should be financed mainly from extrabudgetary sources, while funds from the regular budget should be used exclusively for the implementation of programmes. "Silent" emergencies, which caused the deaths of thousands of children each year from diarrhoeal diseases or respiratory infections should continue to receive attention in the form of priority programmes such as vaccination campaigns. UNICEF was seeking to provide assistance to children living in especially difficult circumstances, a common situation in many Latin American countries, which was closely linked to urban poverty. As mentioned in the report of the Executive Director, little progress had been made towards eliminating poverty and, in the case of Latin America, the number of the poor would increase by 20 per cent in 1993 in comparison with 1990. The programmes launched so far must be evaluated with a view to achieving better results. Moreover, in order to achieve development with a human face, it was essential to redouble efforts to reduce poverty and to promote awareness of the initial negative impact of structural adjustment programmes on the social sector. Nicaragua supported an increase in the resources to be allocated to the Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean (SAFLAC), whose activities represented an innovative strategy. With regard to the disparities that existed between boys and girls (manifested, in particular, in the higher infant mortality rates among girls, the lack of educational opportunities,

(Mr. Paez, Nicaragua)

sexual abuse leading to early pregnancy), the awareness-raising programmes which Governments implemented with the support of UNICEF and non-governmental organizations were of great importance.

81. The recent evaluation of UNICEF was another question on which the members of the Executive Board were required to express their views. Nicaragua, which was seeking to promote national reconciliation and for which evaluations were a commonplace activity, attached great importance to the recommendations contained in the synthesis report of the evaluation (E/ICEF/1993/CRP.7) as well as to the comments of the Executive Director on the evaluation (E/ICEF/1993/CRP.8).

82. Nicaragua had the necessary political will to implement the programme of social reforms presented by the President of the Republic, Mrs. Chamorro, at the opening of the ninth session of the National Assembly, on 10 January 1993. Briefly describing the main thrust of the programme of reforms and quoting extracts from the address of the President of the Republic, he pointed out that a social committee comprising representatives of the Ministries of Education, Labour, Health, Finance, Social Welfare, the Office of the President, the Office of Social Security and Social Welfare, the Sports Institute, and the Emergency Social Investment Fund, met each week under the chairmanship of the Minister of Social Welfare.

83. In the field of health, particular emphasis was placed on various services and programmes (including pre- and post-natal care, encouragement of breastfeeding, family planning, vaccination, nutritional education, etc.). In addition, a prevention programme was seeking to reduce the incidence of malaria and dengue fever and to vaccinate all children under 15 years of age against measles in the hope of eradicating that disease by 1997, in accordance with the decisions adopted at the Summit Meeting of the Presidents of Latin America, held at Tegucigalpa (Honduras) in December 1991. The process of administrative and financial decentralization, begun in 1992 by the Ministry of Health, should lead to more effective management of that sector. The objective of those measures, together with the measures adopted in the education sector (aimed in particular, at reducing the school drop-out rate by assigning the best teachers to the two levels of education, permitting automatic promotion from one class to another, and by establishing school canteens) was to improve the quality of the essential social services of which disadvantaged groups were the main beneficiaries.

84. In the face of hard economic realities, Nicaragua, which had undergone profound changes and had installed a democratic government, was trying to assist the 20,000 uneducated children who had been forced by the war to abandon school. In 1993 priority was being given to those children who had been unable to benefit from essential education and health services.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.